

Liaison

Library Association News-Sheet

News Editors: R. G. Surridge and D. R. Jamieson

October 1958

BRIGHTON CONFERENCE

THERE was no distinctive theme to the 1958 Conference. Delegates went from session to session to hear subjects ranging from buildings to books from county libraries to government publications, staffing shortages to college libraries. But if there was no planned subject cohesion there were two dominant notes.

At almost every session there was manifest a crying need for the wherewithal to build a library service—*MONEY*. From Lord Birkett in his gracious address, to Mr. Carter asking for a larger slice of the building cake, to Mr. Pocklington condemning the manner in which local government salary scales are applied to librarians, there was throughout the Conference an undertone of gloom that libraries should always be subject to such unfair financial stringency.

The attitude of the Association towards its public relations seemed to be ever coming to the surface and during the week members were constantly referring to the empty seats at the Press tables. On one occasion the President's sceptical approach to propaganda came under the most searching criticism from a leading exponent of the publicists, Mr. W. Best Harris (Plymouth).

"LIAISON" AT BRIGHTON—

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

TRENAMAN ON "THE GAP"

LORD BIRKETT

Advertise—Publicise—"Sell"

MONEY,

MONEY,

MONEY!

In reporting the Proceedings at Brighton *Liaison's* function has been to convey, perhaps, something of the Conference atmosphere and to pick out the main features of most of the papers and the discussions. Obviously, this can be no substitute for the full Conference Proceedings, which will appear shortly. The editors are most grateful to those delegates who reported sessions which the editors were unable to attend, particularly Messrs. A. Dunn, E. H. Milligan, G. E. Smith, L. G. Lovell and J. Dove.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

IN the course of his Presidential address Prof. Irwin gave the Conference what Mr. W. B. Paton described in his vote of thanks as "a forthright, topical, down-to-earth homily, and with it a salutary dose of idealism". And such it was—an address of charm, quiet humour and scholarship.

After an analysis of types of librarian Prof. Irwin commented, "it is our work rather than the staff that gets separated into administrative, technical and clerical compartments. The true work of librarianship is all technical and bibliographical". "Parkinson's Law" was quoted effectively to describe disproportionate growth of administrative work as organizations grow in size and complexity. He cautioned the use of automation with the challenging statement, "I doubt whether any library in this country is really big enough to contemplate it seriously on a large scale. Perhaps no library ought to be as big as this."

Committees were referred to as "the most time-consuming instrument (and paper-consuming) that besets the administrative staff", and it was this passage of the President's speech that brought delegates to cheers. Conferences were subjected to a similar and searching scrutiny and on their publicity value to the man in the street, Prof. Irwin was emphatic: "Of one thing there is no shadow of doubt—propaganda is dangerous unless you can deliver the goods. Publicity on a national scale pays if there is a nation-wide service with uniformly high standards; without this it may come back on you like a boomerang." The President also raised the question whether the time, money and effort spent on such conferences were worth while at all; whether an alteration was wanted in the form it takes or its organization, or indeed whether branch and sectional conferences gave better value.

Prof. Irwin assessed the qualities and responsibilities of librarians and concluded with a declaration of pride and faith in the value of books and librarianship, believing that "it is time that we made a new dedication of ourselves to this great mission of ours."

LIBRARIES MUST FILL "THE GAP"

In the Presidential address, Professor Irwin had cautioned his audience against exaggerating the benefits of conference, and the old hands had probably written off such a function as an opportunity to learn anything that was new. Where, then, the value of a yearly gathering of the profession? Just because every other body is doing it? Dr. Trenaman, Further Education Liaison Officer of the B.B.C., provided a reminder that conference can be the occasion for a stimulating exercise in re-affirming the primary purposes of library service.

Dr. Trenaman recently made a survey of people's attitudes to education and educational opportunities in adult life, taking a carefully selected sample of a thousand men and women in London and Oxford. Complexities were the natural product of the survey, but a general pattern did emerge. A little more than half retained a lively curiosity for learning more about the world they live in or for increasing their general knowledge. The remainder generally displayed little enthusiasm or interest for acquiring knowledge, were incurious, or even resistant to learning. The part played by elementary education in forming these attitudes in later life appeared to be considerable, and from this there stemmed a significant factor in accounting for the attitude of those who showed little or no interest in learning. To them education was identified with *authority* and the formal nature of compulsory schooling.

The significance of the public libraries at this point could be important, since they have the immense advantage of being an informal agency. It is a problem that demands much care, for Dr. Trenaman's analysis showed that among those with small sympathy for education it was not a case of "invincible ignorance", nor were they simply content with rubbish. Again, there were frequently good reasons for their limited reading demands—arduous or monotonous working conditions and shift hours were obvious examples.

Whatever might be the answer to this problem—and Dr. Trenaman felt certain there was an answer—his survey had confirmed the belief that public libraries have a unique social responsibility in filling "the great gap in knowledge between the under-equipped majority and the more educated minority".

CUTTING THE CAKE

OR, TO BUILD—OR NOT TO BUILD

In a quite outstanding address Mr. G. A. Carter (Warrington) took arms against a whole sea of "unsuitable, outdated and woefully inadequate municipal central libraries . . . to say nothing of the makeshift headquarters used by so many county authorities". His armoury included a fearsome rack of statistical ammunition well directed at the target.

Of the 344 library services listed in the *Libraries, Museums and Art Galleries Year Book*, his analysis showed that **78 per cent of their central libraries are over 50 years old, 25 per cent are between 12 and 50 years old, and only 1.4 per cent are post-war.**

The capital costs of all buildings since the war amounted to about £10,316 million, of which less than £2 million had been expended on 5 new central libraries (two of which were complete, but not opened pre-war) and 236 branches, one third of which are pre-fabricated. These facts were impressively demonstrated on the platform by the cutting of a specially constructed "building cake". The most effective comment of the whole conference was Mr. Carter's eloquent blowing away of the wisp of paper that represented libraries.

Further analyses were made of school libraries, industrial and university buildings, and in the light of quite remarkable building progress in these categories it was difficult to understand "why local authorities are apparently so reluctant to spend money on public libraries, and especially upon new public library buildings". On this issue Mr. Carter concluded that "the restrictions of the post-war years imposed by successive central governments can be used, and have been used, by half-hearted local authorities as a convenient excuse to shelve all manner of building projects indefinitely".

More cakes were cut, Mr. Carter assessed the reasons for such financial stringency, he reviewed local authority expenditure and gave his opinions on the value of public libraries and the necessity for an imaginative building programme.

"Striped-Trousered Philanthropists"

Discussion that followed reinforced Mr. Carter's views, but became more discursive. On more than one occasion reference was made to the lack of press

coverage of all papers at the Conference. The general view of what librarians ought to do seemed admirably epitomized by a delightful comment from Alderman Milner (Birmingham). "Cease being striped-trousered philanthropists", said he, "become militant. A nation that can afford the luxury of hydrogen bombs can afford public libraries."

Mr. Haugh's challenging demand that the A.M.C. "investigate its own policy on libraries . . . its evidence to the Roberts' Committee was disgraceful" exploded that body's theory, utterly and completely. The dignified reply from the Vice-Chairman of the Libraries Committee of the A.M.C. shocked delegates by denying any responsibility by this committee for the document at all.

With a statement by two of the jolliest characters of the week, that librarians are a dull and gloomy lot at conferences, who fail to get across to the people, who need to get in touch with Fleet Street over conferences, the discussion ended. And with it all the conference closed on an aggressive, optimistic note.

CLOSING THE SHOP

Recently I attended the Ontario Library Association Conference where I met other members of the English fraternity, one of whom I worked with at Finchley.

At this Conference was created an Institute of Professional Librarians and it was only after a struggle that they accepted us with our English qualifications. However any English librarians without a University degree who arrive in Ontario after 1st January, 1959, will not be admitted as members of this Institute.

This, I think, should be made known back home.

J. BROWN
Smith Falls

COUNTY LIBRARY BUILDINGS

Most questionnaires find their fittest home in the waste-paper basket as pointless time-wasters, and many Conference addresses leave one grateful only that the time wasted listening to them, being before eleven or after two-thirty, could not have been profitably spent anyway. Mr. S. G. Berriman's paper at the County Library Section session on "Design and Provision of County Library Buildings" proved, however, to be an exception to both these rules.

Based on a questionnaire sent to county librarians regarding existing post-war buildings and the extent and nature of the vast building backlog, Mr. Berriman's paper will for years to come be treasured by both students and examiners, for it gave us a quite exceptionally generous helping of something of which the library profession is sadly starved—the systematic presentation of systematically collected information about the current library scene.

That library building is alarmingly in arrears we all know in a general sort of way. Mr. Berriman informed us that, so far as county libraries are concerned, it is two million pounds in arrears, and he added a plea for those arrears to be wiped off in three annual instalments—a modest enough claim in a society which has spent hundreds of millions on an atomic energy programme of which only the smallest results are yet visible. The speaker did not hesitate to hammer home the unfortunate outcome of the present tradition of bad or non-existent buildings in such matters as public esteem, provision of facilities, and working conditions at which many a factory-worker would (and rightly) protest in no uncertain fashion.

The Brighter Side

The surprise of the afternoon, to a municipal librarian (and one, moreover, who tends to think of the county as a desolate tract between two cities), came when Mr. Berriman turned to the brighter side of the picture, to describe to us, and afterwards (accompanied by a running commentary which succeeded perfectly in imparting information without distracting attention from the screen) show us coloured slides of recently built county library branches. One after the other they came—from Buckinghamshire and Lancashire, from Middlesex and Sussex; buildings of a quality which we from smaller municipal libraries had despaired of ever seeing built again. Buildings of an architectural beauty and a functional merit almost Scandinavian—examples of the new architecture of light and space which municipal librarians enviously inspect at Education and Health Department opening ceremonies, whilst we manage with the wooden hut and the converted shop. Buildings giving rise to uneasy thoughts about the comparison in results achieved by the Education Committee-controlled County Libraries and the allegedly free municipal ones.

DISCUSSION

In the discussion, one motif predominated among the non-county incursors: how is it that we know so little of this impressive body of new building? Little of it has been reported in the professional press, it was pointed out, and more than one speaker pleaded for a service by which we could all be circularised with information about new buildings as they are planned. One point not mentioned (which would be taken care of by such a service) is that some of us are just too busy to cope with writing up our new buildings and dealing with the barrage of enquiries—mostly frivolous—which a press report of even the most ordinary new building produces.

Opinions clashed violently on the merits of buildings incorporating school clinics, welfare centres, and so on, as well as branch libraries. These joint user arrangements were generally thought to be a *bad thing*, unless, which is seldom the case, it is the *library* which dictates policy on siting, layout, and caretaking.

Perhaps the most convincing evidence of the high and professional quality of Mr. Berriman's paper was that we heard little from proud Chairmen of how Haggisburgh had improvised the world's best branch library from a disused pigsty for two pounds nine and fivepence.

TRAVELLING BURSARY?

The financial position of the County Libraries Section was shown at its A.G.M. at Brighton to be very sound. Repayment to the L.A. of £450 capitation still left a working balance of over £600 and it was suggested by one member that some of the money might be used to endow an annual travelling bursary. The suggestion was accepted for consideration, although at the same time it was pointed out that some of the balance would probably be used to finance regional activities, as a supplement to the Week-End Schools.

LIFTING THE LID

Perhaps the most realistic and down-to-earth paper of the Conference was given by Mr. Pocklington at the A.A.L. session. This paper had a double purpose. Realizing the presence of authority delegates and Chief Librarians his plan was to give "an insight into the thoughts and aspirations of my generation whilst at the same time drawing attention to some unpleasant features of the public library service".

He believed that "it is in the middle stratum of the public library hierarchy—at senior and assistant and branch librarian level—that the public library movement of this country seems to be suffering a serious reversal". He stressed convincingly the one-way flow of these librarians either to special libraries, abroad or out of the profession altogether, some of them librarians of the highest calibre. Salaries alone were not the main reason for this loss, but rather the manner in which local government salary scales are applied to libraries.

Mr. Pocklington went on to pillory "the actions of certain chief librarians and local authorities who do discredit to the whole service", and was most emphatic in his condemnation of librarians who accept blacklisted posts, reminding us that "black" authorities and librarians "who betray the rest of the profession are not easily forgotten". Case histories of three "fixed" jobs were given in a most forthright manner (probably for the first time at any L.A. Conference) as discouraging aspects of present-day employment. Internal promotion, niggardly authorities and general discourtesy all came within this frank, outspoken survey.

Mr. Pocklington concluded his paper with some definite suggestions to improve the position. One and all applauded him for a paper that could so easily have been "sour grapes" but which was fair, understanding and constructive and which was delivered with conviction.

"AN INCURABLE IDEALIST"

An attendance of well over 200 at the Tuesday afternoon session, arranged by the University and Research Section on *The Technical College and its Library*, was some indication of the interest which the subject held, not only for librarians of such colleges themselves, but for their colleagues in neighbouring municipal or county libraries.

The introduction by Dr. H. Lowery (Principal of the South-West Essex Technical College and School of Art) came as a welcome breath of fresh air. Speaking from 30 years' experience, describing himself as "an incurable idealist" yet with his feet firmly planted on the ground, he stressed the need for the library to be recognized as the centre of life of the Technical College. This was an inspiring talk with a fervour in the history of librarianship that communicated itself to all who were there. But, asked Mr. Baxter (Librarian, Coventry Technical College) in a carefully argued paper, how was such an ideal possible unless the authorities, in making appointments, offered status and salaries adequate to attract folk who could meet on equal terms with heads of other departments, so that college librarians were fully aware of trends of thought and likely changes of policy and of curriculum?

The discussion, which was lively, but perhaps inevitably diffuse, suggested that the two papers had raised a number of questions which deserved further examination after Brighton.

WRITING FOR CHILDREN

In his address on "Writing for Children" to the Youth Libraries Section, Mr. James Reeves ascribed his success to experience as a teacher and to his ability to retire for brief periods from the stresses of adult life and think in a childlike way. A packed audience listened with attention to an autobiographical account of how he came to write his poems, stories and plays. The bare bones of his criterion for judging children's literature are quickly set down, but they were delivered with many paradoxical and provocative asides. "Only a child", he said, "can write for children." The most daunting experience for a writer was success; because of the practical impossibility of producing an adequate sequel.

Verse should not be cosy, and in the teaching of verse-appreciation care must be taken to ensure that a child is not swamped with easy poetry at school; he must be led on to expect rich and challenging poetical experiences in adult life.

Fiction for children has a civilizing influence. It needs two opposing qualities: the first is pace, action, suspense; and the second, atmosphere or illusion.

It was probably inevitable that the discussion afterwards could not maintain this level and it consisted largely of diametrically opposed views on the effect of T.V. on children's reading.

WITHIN seconds of the opening of the meeting it was clear that there was to be no easy passage through the agenda. On the first item, the minutes of the previous A.G.M., Mr. Luke (Denbighshire) made what seemed to be the very sensible suggestion that the minutes of the A.G.M. be incorporated in the Annual Report. With the assurance of the President that this would be seriously considered by the Council Mr. Luke was content.

The motion from Penge U.D.C. had been looming over the whole conference and it manifested itself initially on the next item which seemed innocuous, the report of the Scrutineers on the election of Council for 1958. On a point of order Councillor Magness (Wittenhall) requested in a very responsible, well prepared and well stated case that the Penge motion be taken at this stage. The President found himself unable to alter the order of the agenda, but gave the most categorical assurance that the matter would be treated in the fairest possible manner at the stated place in the agenda.

The Annual Report for 1957 met with some opposition. Mr. McColvin (Westminster) took leave of the Council to give a carefully prepared statement on the shape of negotiations that had been reached in the sale of Chaucer House. Three questions then followed in quick succession.

Mr. Plumb (South-Eastern Regional Library System) asked for further information on the work of the sub-committee which had been examining the National Lending Library project and its relations with other library agencies. To this no immediate reply was available from the platform, but a reply was promised at a later date.

Mr. Davison (United Steel) repeated his pressure of previous years by a further demand to know of steps that had been taken in connexion with certain research projects. In the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of the University and Research Section, the President had no alternative but to undertake to raise the matter with that Section.

Councillor Bell (Newcastle upon Tyne) questioned the activity over the past year of the sub-committee that had been set up to investigate the Council's present procedure and difficulties when dealing with salary questions. **Mr. Haugh** (Bristol), as Chairman of the Membership Committee, was able to reply that the whole question was under constant attention and that the Library Association acted either on open breach of nationally agreed conditions of service, or on salaries demonstrably below the national average for similar posts. The President found that he required notice of Councillor Bell's next question, which related to the high subscription rate to the periodical publications of the Pergamon Press on sale to libraries.

THE PENGE MOTION - - -

If these were the *hors d'oeuvres*, the main meal, the Penge motion, was now before the meeting. It was well prepared and admirably served by Councillor Chambers (Penge), but, as we were to see later, found inedible by the majority in the hall. **Councillor Chambers**, representing Penge U.D.C., wanted certain deletions from the L.A. Memorandum of Evidence to the Roberts Committee and with the consent of this A.G.M. to send a copy of this decision to that committee.

His Council were quarrelling in the main neither with the general conclusions on population or on expenditure recommended in the Report, nor with the fact that the evidence was presented to the Committee without prior consultation with the members, nor even with the method of its presentation. The effect of this motion was to remove from section 21 of the evidence all reference to expenditure on books. He believed it impossible to state figures without a consideration of the size of the authority—otherwise conclusions would be false. The L.A. was itself divided on this question and the evidence as such was aimed at limiting the powers of small authorities and indeed assisting the anti-small library section of the profession. He further believed that the L.A. should have approached the matter against the whole background of local government re-organization.

Mr. Christopher (Penge), in seconding the motion, ably reinforced all these points and felt that

GENERAL MEETING

the very use of these figures that he wished deleted was at variance with the L.A.'s self-confessed difficulties in another section of the evidence. He believed that each case should be treated on its merits.

— — — AND THE REPLY

It fell to Mr. Gardner, as Chairman of the Committee that prepared the Evidence, to ask the meeting to reject this motion. The Roberts Committee's terms of reference gave the vision of a National Library Service. Within this concept the size of library areas were no longer an over-riding factor. He paid a tribute to that committee which must go on record as one of the most hard working of all time, with approximately 20 meetings each of something like 8 hours' duration. This had the most important potential of any Report since the Kenyon Report. The L.A. had not the responsibility for seeing how these recommendations were to be achieved—this was for the Roberts Committee—but to state what it believed true for a better library service in this country. Mr. Gardner had hoped that small authorities would have welcomed the evidence, "there is not the slightest thing in it for good small authorities to fear".

He had a certain sympathy with the desire to remove the arbitrary population limit in Section 24, but the evidence in no way recommended arbitrary action and he was convinced that all necessary safeguards had been taken.

Mr. Gardner concluded his cogent defence of the Council with an eloquent appeal to remind all members "that you are here as members of the Library Association—you would not be here otherwise—the Library Association is the only authority capable of speaking for the library profession".

A SECRET BALLOT

Mr. Christopher (Penge) immediately rose to discount any suggestion that his authority had anything to do with the Smaller Libraries Group. A motion from Dr. Chandler (Liverpool) that the motion be now put to the meeting was carried by a show of hands, 482 to 384 votes.

Amid cries from Councillor Chambers, who felt "disgusted that the fullest discussion was not allowed", the meeting further decided that a secret ballot be held. This is achieved at an A.G.M. by a motion to the chair supported by 20 members. To many members the introduction of a secret ballot at a professional A.G.M. may have a somewhat unpleasant flavour, but it was reported privately by some librarians that they had been intimidated by their authority delegates, so a secret ballot should dispose of any "pressure".

The Penge motion was defeated, 439 to 529 votes.

A pleasant feature of the Conference was the large number of librarians, who had travelled in just for the day, by coach, car and train to partake in the A.G.M.

The proceedings closed on the sad note of announcing that two much esteemed officers of the Association, Mr. Welsford, Secretary, and Mr. Henrik Jones, Librarian, were to retire in 1959. The President wished them both long and happy retirements, sentiments demonstrably echoed throughout the hall.

SMALLER LIBRARIES GROUP—A.G.M.

Some 200 delegates attended the Annual General Meeting of the Smaller Libraries Group at Brighton, on Tuesday, 23rd September.

The following were re-elected to office:

Chairman: Alderman T. Haskins, C.C.

Vice-Chairman: H. G. T. Christopher

Hon. Treasurer: T. W. Muskett

Hon. Secretary: J. F. T. Thomson

The printed "Summary of Evidence submitted to the Committee on Public Library Service in England and Wales" was offered to the meeting for approval. Following upon a motion "That the principle of a population figure as a criterion for judging library efficiency be rejected", the meeting endorsed the Executive Committee's evidence in which, after certain provisos for existing services, the figure of 15,000 population was submitted.

In a discussion on the publications of the Group, it was reported by the Secretary that almost 3,000 copies of the *Standard of Service for Smaller Authorities* had been sold, and, after a suggestion from the body of the hall, it was agreed that the Committee would look into the question of a revised edition of the pamphlet. It was later agreed that, following upon the warm reception of the duplicated "Supplementary Evidence", arrangements would be made for the immediate printing of this in the style and format of the other Group publications.

NEW TOWNS . . . NEW IDEAS . . . NEW SPEAKERS

The trilogy of papers which followed the annual general meeting of the County Libraries Section proved to be one of the brightest points of the whole Conference. For a start there was **Mr. Baguley** (Hampshire), whose fluent, confident delivery of a thoroughly interesting paper was one of those small surprises any Conference may hope to produce. But it was typical of all three speakers at this session—their contributions compelled attention, and occasionally succeeded in catching the imagination.

Mr. Baguley, on providing libraries for the people in those reputedly difficult social units the "new towns" and their satellites the "new estates", offered the results of a keen and sympathetic observation of the "artificial and abnormal" conditions, and a tolerant appreciation of the attendant problems. "It takes time", he put it "for these people to come to terms with their new surroundings". Among a group whose daily reading rarely includes the quality newspapers it is no surprise to find readers feeling "out of place in a bookish world, or to display near-guilt at being discovered amidst books". Mr. Baguley recommended the often cramped service conditions: "Nothing like it to bring readers and staff together". But these were no conditions for a display of formality by the staff; a tolerant, friendly attitude was vital. The uproar of babies and young children, who inevitably accompany the young housewives who make up a good proportion of the readers, must be expected and accepted, and a high 'accident rate' to the stock is likely. But, all in all, Mr. Baguley was persuasive that this could be a golden opportunity to win confidence and readers.

Anne Marley (Buckinghamshire) spoke competently on the efforts of her authority to give purpose and direction to libraries in the schools. The School Library Service in Buckinghamshire does all it can on the one hand to influence parents in favour of their children reading and using libraries; while on the other hand direct instruction in the form of three-day courses in library fundamentals are conducted for school teachers. The key to success in this essential arm of the library cause appears to lie in close, continuing contact by the School Library Service with teachers, parents, and the schools.

The bearded, piratical mien of **Mr. G. Thomas** (Warwickshire)—he was aptly dubbed "The Bookaneer"—well suited his theme. He was preaching the aggressive salesman's approach to starting a mobile library service: it sells vacuum cleaners, why not books? For every new service area his method is to explore the entire territory, road by road, canvass the potential readers and "sell" them the library service; plot the stopping places and schedule the runs (the pace is approxi-

mately 250 stops in a fortnight). All this before the vehicle has left the coach-builders. Then follow up with membership cards and a letter giving particulars of the service which have been decided after analysing the results of the exploration. The crucial point—and to this the speaker returned many times—is direct, personal contact with those it is hoped to enrol as new readers. It led him into undignified affrays with farm dogs, being regaled with rough cider, mistaken for a revivalist minister, and becoming the butt for ratepayers with a grievance. But then the salesman expects these hazards, and Mr. Thomas's enterprising and "hard talking" technique clearly sells books in Warwickshire.

VOCABULARIUM BIBLIOTHECARIUM

With the development of exchanges between libraries in different countries, professional librarians are finding it increasingly necessary to have a broad knowledge of a language other than their own. Even the most experienced can be excused for not knowing the French equivalent for the English expression "surety-bond" or the German version of the French "analyse signalétique". Yet he may suffer from the lack of such knowledge.

To help specialists overcome these obstacles Unesco issued in 1953, under the title *Vocabularium bibliothecarii*, a basic vocabulary for library work, in English, French and German, which listed 2,500 specialized terms.

So great was the demand for this work that Unesco has now published a supplement* which will enable users of the *Vocabularium* to correct and amplify the information available in their copy of the first edition. The preparation of the supplement was entrusted to Mr. Anthony Thompson, M.A., F.L.A., who worked on the first edition of the vocabulary.

* *Vocabularium bibliothecarii, Supplement 1958*, Unesco, Paris. H.M.S.O., August, 1958. 6s.

"YOU PEOPLE HAVE GOT TO ADVERTISE!"

At one and the same session papers on special, university and public library problems were found lumped together. It was an arrangement that would hit or miss; and in the event it made a distinct hit with its audience. A number of delegates welcomed this assembly of different view-points, and that which drew most comment was from Miss Willson (Hammersmith) on the crying need for more publicity and better public relations.

Inevitably, as Miss Willson pointed out, money is our prime need for the improvement of staffing, buildings and all service aspects. We have never had a stronger case to make, but we need to convince the public of it, not ourselves, and to achieve this we must have well-directed publicity. Miss Willson detected ignorance of the library service not only among the general public but among such powerful influences as *The Times*, the B.B.C., and the teaching profession. The policy for better publicity should be two-fold. First, at a national level, the appointment of a L.A. Public Relations Officer, concerned with policy matters and answering questions on behalf of the profession. Second (and this on the basis that "it is the best products which are the most advertised today") good local publicity to strengthen the hand of those who could be of favourable influence for their public libraries in the Council chambers.

There was plenty of support for Miss Willson and our headline is a quotation from one delegate. Councillor Rees of Birmingham, with a rolling Welsh eloquence, rounded on the audience to remind them that it was up to the L.A. to get effective publicity—"Don't blame it all on the local authorities. Look at the press tables at this Conference—empty!" Another took the forceful line: "Libraries are a service—not an amenity", he urged. The last word was with Mr. Best Harris (Plymouth). Mr. Harris sharply attacked what he felt had been expressed in the Presidential address as the established attitude of the Library Association of antipathy towards an effective public relations policy. "We have a vast potential and a vast case to present to society"; public libraries, declared Mr. Harris, must devote more and more of their time to this end, and he rebuked the President who, he considered, had failed to see this need.

... And points from the other papers

The senior posts in a university library require graduates; but there is work to be done which does not require high academic qualifications. Present salary scales discriminate against this latter group and there is a case for up-grading or re-scaling these posts. Sheffield University have just created a new scale, equivalent to APT 1, for professionally qualified non-graduates.

W. L. SAUNDERS (*Sheffield University*)

Faced with the ever-growing demand for scientific, technical and commercial information, the public librarian has become more aware of the value of some specialized subject knowledge. This has created for the first time a far better understanding of what are the common foundations of librarianship...

But there is little doubt that the continuing dominance of the scene by the public librarian is hindering, rather than encouraging, the growth of the profession...

Is it not strange that whereas examinations in junior schools are now considered a doubtful method of selection, the number of papers for which a library student must sit has increased ten-fold since the war? Have we sought equality with a degree rather than concentrating on providing suitable training for a job of work?

G. H. WRIGHT (*Hertfordshire County*)

BETTER NEWS FROM MELTON

A measure of success has attended the efforts of Councillor Brewster to sting his Library Committee into improving the "pathetic" and "inadequate" library facilities at Melton Mowbray (see September *Liaison*).

At the monthly meeting, on September 24th, it was decided by the Committee to double the book fund from £300 to £600 as part of "a general expansion of the library service". A move simultaneously to halve the sum spent on hiring books from the County may possibly fail. Improvements to the library premises were also to be considered.

Councillor Brewster was encouraged by these moves but cautioned his colleagues against exaggerating the extent of what they had decided: it amounted to less than an extra halfpenny on the rates and other anomalies remained. Nevertheless, the chairman was apparently carried away by it all, for he was confident they would achieve what he described as "near-perfection".

BRIEFLY

Queen's Librarian. Mr. R. C. Mackworth-Young has been appointed Librarian and Assistant Keeper of the Queen's Archives, in succession to Sir Owen Morshead, who has retired. Sir Owen takes the title of Librarian Emeritus to Her Majesty.

Washington. Over recent years secondary school students in the metropolitan area of the capital have been making such increasingly heavy use of the Library of Congress for materials ordinarily available in school or public libraries that it has proved a considerable diversion of both staff and equipment. High school students are now required to present a letter from their head teachers, certifying that the materials are not available elsewhere, before they may use the reading rooms.

TALIC—the Tyneside Association of Libraries for Industry and Commerce—has now been formally established (previously reported in June *Liaison*). Member firms will pool their literature resources and co-operate with Tyneside libraries in answering enquiries. **Tees-side** are said to be watching the progress of Talic with interest as a similar scheme may be adopted in that area. Lack of technical literature resources is not so much a problem there as a knowledge of how and where to obtain them, so a guide is being compiled as a first step.

A new mobile library to serve **Netherton**, on one of the housing estates at Bootle, will accommodate 3,000 books and its equipment is to include a built-in electric kitchenette for the staff.

Manchester's Library Theatre has received a cheque for £5,000 from Granada Television, while A.B.C. Television have announced that they will completely re-seat and re-carpet the Library Theatre at a cost of between £3,500 and £4,000.

New by-laws at **Lancaster** were applied recently to impose a fine of £1 for failure to return two library books within seven days of notice being served, and in a similar case the same fine was made, plus a continuing penalty of 1s. a day for so long as the book was retained.

Initial Claim. As a result of re-organization the Chemical Research Laboratory has been renamed the National Chemical Laboratory. To avoid confusion it has been suggested that its recognized abbreviation be "Nat. Chem. Lab.", in view of the prior claim of the National Central Library to "N.C.L."

Moscow. An electronic brain which can examine and analyse scientific literature is being built at one of the laboratories of the All-Union Institute for Scientific-Technical Information of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences.

The Metals Information Center of Tomorrow, a film produced by the U.S. Western Reserve University Documentation Center and the American Society for Metals, was selected for showing at the 1958 Edinburgh International Film Festival, last month. The film depicts machine searching of metallurgical literature using an experimental computer developed for the purpose.

Economy-minded **Southport** have decided that the uniforms of library caretakers due for replacement this year should be worn for another 12 months.

The Head of **Mexico's** Treasury is a man of many parts, according to *The Times* correspondent in that country. In addition to being the founder of the *Boletín Bibliográfico de Hacienda* ("the best periodical published in Mexico today"), which deals—*inter alia*—with bibliography, this official has modernized the Treasury library in a way that, for speed of service, "might be the envy of the British Museum".

Egg and Bacon? To the dismaying stories of abuse of books by a tiny proportion of public library readers, can be added the report from Lewisham that in one book returned there recently was found—a poached egg.

* * *

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

Joining the ranks of those smaller local authorities who have resisted handing over their library powers to their County Councils is **Whitby** (Yorkshire), population 11,700. In support of relinquishment it was said that Whitby could not afford the staff, the books or the premises for "a full and enlarged library service". Against this it was successfully argued that it would be "a very bad day if the library were handed over to the bureaucrats". . . . **Oadby** (Leicestershire) are similarly concerned that relinquishment may mean the loss of that "friendly interested service" whereby "a lad may go into the library and ask the librarian to choose a book for dad". Explaining all this in a talk locally, the Oadby Librarian (who is also the Finance Officer of the authority) volunteered the remark that "we badly need a card index and cabinet cataloguing system". . . . An enquiry at **Cleator Moor** (Cumberland) has shown that of its 7,000 population barely 300 (four per cent) use the public library, which is maintained by the Parish Council "who feel a certain amount of pride in their ownership of the library presented by the Carnegie Trust". The Council spends £100 a year on additions to the stock of 4,000 books.

PRINTING IN

LONDON

A series of university extension lectures on Printing in London is in progress at the St. Bride Foundation Institute, on Tuesdays at 6.15 p.m. until November 25th. The fee for each lecture is 2s.

The series is concerned with the principal developments in the three chief branches of the London printing and publishing trade—Book, Newspaper, and Jobbing—between 1476 and the present day. A special lecture, on October 21st, will be devoted to what a leading Puritan called in 1645 "that soul-starving or murdering Monopoly", the Bible Patent. Each lecture will be illustrated and on November 25th there will be a visit to Printing House Square to see *The Times* printed.

(We regret that details of these lectures were not available in time to announce them in the September issue.—Eds.)

DUBLIN ASKS FOR MORE

Spend lavishly on sending rockets to the moon when malaria still claims a million or more victims every year? There is something very reminiscent of this current controversy in the appeal which Trinity College, Dublin, has made for £500,000 "to build and endow a major extension to its library". The Dublin appeal brochure puts it neatly but pungently—"The library is the heart of a university, and it is to the universities that we must look more and more, in all the new corruptions to civilization, as our common defences for the preservation of learning and fair thinking. Efficient defences cost money. Two modern fighter aircraft now cost half a million. And that is exactly the figure for which we are asking."

As one of the four Copyright Libraries, Trinity has to find room each year for 35,000 new books, pamphlets and periodicals. Despite every possible space-saving adjustment the present building will be crammed to capacity within five years. Against this incoming tide of new material the staff wage a losing battle to preserve order. Periodicals are consigned to a rabbit-warren of a basement. Maps have sought sanctuary in cellars below the chapel. There is no bindery and no air-conditioning.

Trinity, therefore, seeks not just to patch up for the present, but to build for the future; not merely adequate room for more and more books, but for some of the techniques and equipment which today distinguish a library from a store house.

The Appeal Secretary, Library Extension Fund, Trinity College, Dublin, will deal with any enquiries, while contributions should be made payable to the Library Extension Fund and sent to the Provost.

NORWEGIAN STUDY TOUR

In the June *Liaison* Mr. R. C. Bengt described the visit by library school students to Denmark and Sweden. Another example of a co-operative study tour organized by British library schools was that made of Norway, 10-20th July, when 16 former students of the Loughborough, Manchester and Leeds schools, accompanied by P. M. Whiteman (Lecturer in the Leeds school) made the first study tour of Norway by British librarians.

The group travelled from Newcastle to Bergen, visited Bergen Public Library then crossed the mountains by train to Oslo. In the capital visits included the Deichman Public Library (central, branches and school libraries), the University Library, the Nobel Institute, the Industrial Research Centre, the Libraries' Agency (central purchasing, cataloguing, binding, etc.), and the State Library Inspectorate. Visits were also paid to Frederikstad Public Library (a "central" or "county" library) and to Sarpsborg Public Library. Then a hair-raising bus journey over the mountains to Odden, visiting its public library in the town hall and finally back to Bergen.

Everywhere the party was received with overwhelming hospitality and very great kindness. Our Norwegian colleagues seemed delighted that at last a party from Britain had come to see their libraries. For their part the visitors quickly recognized that Norwegian libraries had much to interest them and have been quite inadequately represented in the literature.

Many Norwegian librarians helped to make this tour a complete success, but special thanks are due to Mr. Anders Andreassen, the Director of Libraries, who supported the project from the first, and to Mrs. Else Granheim, of the State Library Inspectorate, who made all the arrangements at the Norwegian end and accompanied the party during the tour.

PHILIP M. WHITEMAN,
Leeds School of Librarianship.

WE SAY "THANK YOU"

The editors are most grateful to those librarians who have so kindly responded to their appeal for news and press cuttings which might be of interest for *Liaison*. They will always try to acknowledge all letters and cuttings which are sent, but would crave indulgence if, through sheer lack of time, this is not done as promptly as courtesy really requires.

ANNUAL LECTURE—HOVE JUBILEE

DOUBLE OCCASION FOR LORD BIRKETT

"All my life I have been a lover of books, and I have believed in the mighty power that resides in the written word and have shared with men like Gibbon and Macaulay an early and invincible love of reading."

From this powerful opening Lord Birkett developed his theme "On borrowing and owning books". With passages from Shakespeare and Swift, Scott, Housman, Gissing and Dobson, long memorized and treasured, his talk was illustrated. He acknowledged that public libraries had existed with the same problem since 1850, of presenting "to people it seeks to serve, an attractive and appealing representation of the world of books and enjoyment".

In a week of constant self-examination it was refreshing to hear Lord Birkett say, "The Library Association is a vital and essential organization because it contains those who regard an efficient library service as one of the greatest benefits that a modern state can provide, and they supply the enthusiasm and the spirit necessary for success". The real value of the Association lay in the representation of an ideal of service in the world of books that could be obtained nowhere else. No one would ever be able to measure the contribution that the libraries of the world had made to the advancement of learning and the welfare of mankind.

When the report of the Roberts Committee came to be published the speaker earnestly hoped that its major recommendations would include more money for libraries, better buildings and higher standards of service.

He went on to speak of the pleasures inherent in the ownership of books and the pride that lay in personal possession. He spoke of the development of his own personal library from one simple shelf of books to the great personal library that he now has, containing many thousands of volumes.

Lord Birkett's address was one of grace, humour and authority, spoken in cadences of glorious and rich prose that was a delight to all present.

HOVE JUBILEE LUNCHEON

On Wednesday of conference week, 280 persons sat down to lunch in the King Alfred Restaurant to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of Hove Central Public Library. The Mayor of Hove, Councillor Frank H. Nixon, J.P., presided over an audience representing the bookselling, bookbinding and publishing trades, as well as local government and libraries.

The Mayor, with energetic eloquence, responded suitably and expressed the thanks of his Corporation for the magnificent support they had received in what had been something of a gamble.

The toast of literature was ably proposed by Rev. Canon V. K. Lippiett, M.A., a classical scholar of Cambridge and a keen library user. He described literature as "the mirror of human life in memorable speech", saying, "We all read very much that isn't worth reading and the danger is that we are learning to read badly. We just skim through a book looking for something exciting and sensational and we are blind to the art of the author and deaf to the music of his words".

Lord Birkett began his response by congratulating everybody concerned "on these very memorable proceedings". Dealing with the American gift of effective speech he quoted a Senator from California who came with the American lawyers to London last summer: "We have 365 days of sunshine every year and that is a conservative estimate!"

"The great heritage of English Literature", Lord Birkett continued, "is a thing of which we all ought to be intensely proud. Our literature for six centuries at least has displayed the immense flexibility and power of our most noble English tongue, which is perhaps the most expressive language in the world. What literature has done for us all, it has made us aware of the importance of life; this brief life which we are privileged to live. All the past ages have been brought within our reach, windows have been opened into our lives and we can store in our minds, as many of us have done, many of the great expressions which stand by us in every possible emergency."

This was the highlight of the occasion. A brilliant ten minute, extempore after-luncheon speech, from an equally brilliant man who combines an abiding love of literature with a keen sense of humour.